

Message Text

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ACTION OPIC-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

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R 211415Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4842

UNCLAS TUNIS 1586

FOR OPIC

EO 11652: N/Z

TAGS: EFIN, TS

SUBJ: OPIC: FGA APPROVAL OF MANDREL INDUSTRIES

REF: TUNIS 5928

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NOTE FROM MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MOFA) DATED MARCH 11 IN REGARD TO LONG OUTSTANDING APPLICATION FROM MANDREL INDUSTRIES FOR FOREIGN GOVERNMENT APPROVAL (FGA) OF ITS INVESTMENT FOR PURPOSES OF OBTAINING OPIC INVESTMENT INSURANCE. NOTE REVIEWS STATUS OF MANDREL IN TUNISIA AS CONTRACTOR FOR MOBIL EXPLORATION OF TUNISIAGM IT STATES THAO MANDREL HAS OBTAINED TEMPORARY ENTRY NOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS VALUED AT 500,000 DINARS (\$1.150,000) AND HAS TRANSFERRED FOREIGN EXCHANGE EQUIVALENT 9F 275,000 DINARS (\$630,000) TO FINANCE LOCAL COSTS. ,OTE FURTHER STATES TAHT TUNISIAN AUTHORITES CON IDER THAT MATERIAL AND FUNDS IMPORTED BY MANDREL INDUSTRIES ARE "NECESSARY FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT OF ITS CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS TO MOBIL AND THAT THESE IMPORTS ARE AUTHORIZED IN FRAMEWORK OF EXPLORATION CONVENTION BETWEEN GOT AND MOBIL." ORIGINAL AND EMBASSY TRANSLATION

OF NOTE BEING POUCHED.

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2. IN DISCUSSION OF NOTE, RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL IN MOFA

EXPLAINED THAT MADREL CASE RATHER UNIQUE FOR GOT SINCE COMPANY NOT REQUIRED TO GO THROUGH NORMAL APPROVAL PROCESS FOR ITS INVESTMENT IN THIS COUNTRY. IT IS DULY REGISTERED AND OPERATES IN TUNISIA AS CONTRACTOR TO MOBIL, HE SAID, WHICH IN TURN IS GOVERNED BY BASIC CONVENTION WITH GOT FOR PETROLEUM EXPLORATION. OFFICIAL REITERATED THAT PURPOSE OF NOTE IS TO INFORM EMBASSY THAT GOT FULLY APPROVES OF MANDREL ACTIVITIES IN TUNISIA AND ITS INVESTMENT IN THIS COUNTRY.

3. COMMENT. REPEATED EMBASSY DEMARCHES ON BEHALF OF MANDREL HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT GOT UNSURE HOW TO RESPOND TO MADREL APPLICATION FOR FGA ORIGINALLY MADE IN OCTOBER 1972. SINCE MANDREL INVESTMENT NOT COVERED UNDER NORMAL GOT PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING FORMAL APPROVAL UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION, TUNISIAN OFFICIALS CLEARLY RELUCTANT EXPRESS SAME TYPE OF FORMAL APPROVAL THEY WOULD EXTEND IF MANDREL PROJECT HAD PASSED THROUGH INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEES ESTABLISHED TO CONSIDER INDUSTRIAL OR TOURIST INVESTMENT PROPOSALS. WE BELIEVE PRESENT NOTE IS CAREFULLY WORDED AND IS INTENDED AUTHORIZE OPIC TO ISSUE REQUESTED INSURANCE FOR MANDREL INVESTMENT. HOPE THAT THIS WILL ALSO BE SATISFACTORY TO OPIC SINCE WE UNCERTAIN WHETHER MORE EXPLICIT ENDORSEMENT POSSIBLE.
SEELYE

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